

Another bird was reported from near Siddipet in Dubak Mandal, Medak dist., by the DFO, Mr. Shankaran (pers. comm.), who had positive information of a villager having caught it (February 26, 1997) and kept it for a couple of days before the Forest Department staff released the bird.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank the management and staff of ICRISAT Asia Center for permitting us to birdwatch within the campus. We also thank Mr. Shankaran, DFO, APFD for information.

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8. OCCURRENCE OF REDBREASTED PARAKEET *PSITTACULA ALEXANDRI* IN MUMBAI, MAHARASHTRA

The Indian Redbreasted parakeet (*Psittacula alexandri*) is distributed in the lower Himalayas (*terai*, *bhabar*, and up to c. 1500 m) from about Dehra Dun (Kumaon) eastward through Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh, south to Assam, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram(?), Bangladesh (Ali and Ripley 1969 HANDBOOK OF BIRDS OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN, Vol. 3: 172). It is a resident bird with some local nomadic movement depending upon the food

supply. It is found in moist deciduous biotope - thin secondary jungle and in the neighbourhood of shifting cultivation. It generally avoids dense evergreen forests. Like other parakeets, the Indian redbreasted parakeet is a popular cage bird. It is regularly sold in Crawford market in Mumbai (Rajat Bhargava and A.R. Rahmani, 1997, pers. comm.).

In April 1994, I was surprised to see two birds on an Indian champ (*Michelia champaca*)

tree in Andheri (West), a densely populated suburb of Mumbai. They must certainly have been cage escapees. After a gap of about one month, I managed to trace their roost on closely clustered *Artocarpus heterophyllus*, *Syzygium cumini* and *Mangifera indica* trees on a busy street of Andheri. There were nine parakeets which shared this roosting site with other species viz., *Corvus splendens*, *Columba livia* and *Passer domesticus*.

Three years after my first observation, in May 1997, the flock had increased to 15 individuals. One of the most interesting observations was that of a bird entering a hole in a wall at a height of 15 m. Perhaps these

parakeets have started breeding in the Mumbai region.

Near Mumbai, an excellent patch of forest exists in Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP), which is linked to the Western Ghats through other forest patches of Tungareshwar, Matheran and Lonavala. It is likely that the redbreasted parakeet will establish itself and may even spread through the Western Ghats. If so, it will be interesting to study the repercussion on the local birds.

June 27, 1997

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9. SIGHTING OF HODGSON'S FROGMOUTH *BATRACHOSTOMUS HODGSONI* HODGSONI (G.R. GRAY) FROM SIKKIM

The Hodgson's Frogmouth *Batrachostomus hodgsoni* has been recorded as very rare in Sikkim. Found in the Great Rangit Valley by Hodgson and at Namchi (c. 1500 m altitude) by Mandelli (Ali, 1962 THE BIRDS OF SIKKIM, OUP) over a hundred years ago, it was not recorded by Ali (1962) during his visit to Sikkim in 1955.

On November 30, 1994 at around 1100 h one male frogmouth was sighted at Pabong about 4-5 km from Singtam (c. 500 m) on the way to Namchi, by the second author, a forest officer and keen local birdwatcher. The bird flew down and alighted about 6 m from the jeep, beside the road at the turning just above Pabong River.

The area is a relatively undisturbed patch of evergreen forest of *Schima wallichii* and *Dysoxylum* sp. In September-October 1996, the

area was visited briefly in connection with a lowland forest survey. The entire lower stretches of the Teesta and Rangit Valleys (450-500 m.) were surveyed, but in both areas the species was not sighted. Hence the above sighting was a lucky encounter with this very rare species.

February 11, 1997

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10. WOODPECKERS FEEDING ON CASSIA PODS

Cassia fistula is a fairly common tree at the Peechi-Vazhani Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS), its long cylindrical pods are characteristic of this tree. On several occasions, all through my study (1991-1993), I found two species of woodpeckers

— Mahratta (*Picoides mahrattensis*) and Heartspotted (*Hemicircus canente*) associating with the pods of this tree. They were seen pecking the dry, dark-coloured pods and often spent several minutes at a stretch on these pods. Several